

# *Tompkins County Workforce Development Board*

## Youth Oversight Committee

### **MINUTES**

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*Thursday, March 17, 2022 | Zoom Platform*

**Present:** K. Shanks-Booth, C. Malcolm, V. Zeppelin, J. Clemons, J. Harriott

**Excused:**

**Staff:** R. Avila, S. Alvord, D. Lovelace, D. Achilles

**Guests:**

#### **Call to Order**

Ms. Shanks-Booth called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

#### **Approval of Minutes - February 17, 2022**

It was moved by Mr. Malcolm and seconded by Ms. Zeppelin and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the minutes of February 17, 2022.

#### **Approval of Minutes - March 9, 2022**

It was moved by Ms. Zeppelin and seconded by Mr. Malcolm and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to approve the minutes of March 9, 2022.

#### **Summer Youth Employment Program RFP - Review Proposals**

The Committee reviewed answers to questions that were submitted to the respective SYEP bidders. These questions focused on: proposed budgets, the structure of worksite placements, and plans for outreach and recruitment for youth with significant barriers to employment.

The Committee had discussions on each proposal it was expressed concerns that Village of Ithaca has a new structured approach to group employment experience instead of an individual position. Conscious Connection Consulting LLC. proposal budget was a concern having to hire new staff and the breakdown of participants expenses. Office of Employment and Training (OET) has a strong proposal and does outreach outside the City of Ithaca limits. The Ithaca Youth Bureau (IYB) proposal was updated, and responses were well thought out. The Committee ultimately decided is to move forward to vote on contract negotiation with three contactors (OET, IYB, CCC), with intent to negotiate the contracts dependent upon funding allocations.

### **Approval to Move into Contract Negotiation with Office of Employment and Training (OET)**

It was moved by Ms. Shanks-Booth and seconded by Mr. Harriott and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to move into contract negotiation with OET.

### **Approval to Move into Contract Negotiation with Ithaca Youth Bureau (IYB)**

It was moved by Mr. Malcolm and seconded by Mr. Clemons and unanimously adopted by voice vote of members present to move into contract negotiation with IYB.

### **Approval to Move into Contract Negotiation with Conscious Connection Consulting LLC**

It was moved by Mr. Malcolm and seconded by Mr. Clemons and Ms. Zeppelin abstained from voting with concerns of delivering services with the budget that was submitted. Committee members voted to move into contract negotiation with CCC.

### **Declined to Move into Contract Negotiation with Village of Ithaca**

It was moved by Mr. Malcolm and seconded by Mr. Harriott and Ms. Zeppelin voted no with concerns of delivery of services with group employment. The Committee members had a discussion around Ms. Zeppelins no vote and the Committee members decided not to move into contract negotiation with Village of Ithaca.

### **Director's Update**

Ms. Avila reported to the Committee members that the In-demand Occupation List has been approved by the full Board on Tuesday, February 22, 2022 and has been distributed to Office of Employment and Training, TST BOCES, TCCC and other community partners.

Ms. Shanks-Booth asked Committee members to fill out the Proposal Rating Sheet and forward to Ms. Lovelace to have on file.

Ms. Shank-Booth reported to the Committee and congratulated Ms. Avila on her appointment as the Workforce Development Board Director.

### **Adjournment**

Ms. Shanks-Booth adjourned the meeting at 10:01 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 21, 2022

## **Tompkins County Workforce Development Board WIOA YOUTH Supportive Services Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds in the provision of supportive services to enable a youth to participate in WIOA activities.

### **Background**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 20 CFR 681.570 allows for the provision of supportive services that enable a youth to participate in WIOA activities. This policy shall only apply to youth participants enrolled in the WIOA Title I youth program. Under WIOA law, the term “supportive services” means services that include but are not limited to transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under the WIOA Act.

**The goal of Supportive Services is to minimize barriers for youth to enable them to fully participate in workforce development and/or employment activities and opportunities to help them progress along their career pathway.**

### **Policy**

It is the policy of the Tompkins County Workforce Development Board (TCWDB) to offer reasonable supportive services to youth participants to encourage the youth to participate in and complete WIOA Title I activities. The services shall be limited to WIOA youth programs, **including youth who are enrolled in Follow-Up Services**. If supportive services are provided as a follow-up service, they do not extend the date of exit.

**The justification and strategy for providing supportive services must be clearly defined in the youth’s Individualized Service Strategy (ISS).** Actively engaged WIOA youth, or youth enrolled in Follow-up may receive Supportive Services if funding is available and each youth has met criteria and guidelines set forth in local county policies. There are no specific requirements for when to provide supportive services. They may be provided based on the needs of the participant as identified in the youth’s ISS.

All supportive services are subject to the availability of WIOA funds and are not an entitlement. TCWDB may suspend or withdraw authorization for supportive services at any time and at the sole discretion of TCWDB.

**Allowable Supportive Services are defined in TEGL 21-16.** Services that enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities include, but are not limited to:

- Linkages to community services
- Childcare/Dependent Care costs\*
- Assistance with housing\*
- Transportation support\*\*
- Needs-related payments
- Assistance with educational testing
- Reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities
- Legal Aid services
- Referrals to health care
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear
- Assistance with book fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes
- Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications

Supportive services may only be provided to Youth who are participating in WIOA services and who are unable to obtain such supportive services through other programs providing such services and cannot receive supportive services through referrals to partner agencies and other community service providers (e.g, ACCES-VR). Supportive Services must be necessary and utilized only to enable a youth to participate in WIOA activities.

**Reimbursement costs:**

If an enrolled youth pre-pays a cost that can qualify as a supportive service cost, the youth may be reimbursed those costs.

- a) Stipulation for reimbursement is that the youth must be employed or in training for 30 days before reimbursement can be processed
- b) No reimbursements can be processed without supporting receipts
- c) Must be WIOA enrolled and costs must occur after WIOA youth enrollment.

**Other Supportive Services costs:**

Other Supportive Services can include uniforms, fees related to training such as testing.

Drafted: 3.14.22

Board Approved:

Maximum funding cap for Fees & Required Training Expenses is **\$2,000** of the total **\$9,000** funding cap.

**Electronic Devices:**

According to Program guidance Letter #21-02 LWDBs may purchase and distribute Electronic Devices such as laptops, tablets, and smart phones for employment and training program participants using Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I funds.

Related items such as, but not limited to replacement charging cables and/or wall plugs, flash drives, printer cables or HDMI cables, cellular or internet service, and software can be purchased under this Supportive Services policy and are not subject to the Electronic Devices policy.

Participants must attest they do not own a comparable Electronic Device, or they only own an old inadequate device, and do not have sufficient personal funds to purchase these items, and they are unable to obtain an adequate Electronic Device through another program they are enrolled in or eligible for.

a. No more than one Electronic Device may be purchased per participant, per lifetime.

b. Contingent upon the current electronic Devices Policy.

**Any Combination of Supportive Services will not exceed \$9,000**

**\*Housing, Childcare or Dependent Care costs:**

All community and local agencies that could provide this supportive service should be contacted prior to utilizing WIOA youth funding (i.e. "all other options exhausted").

a) Housing, Childcare or Dependent care assistance will not exceed duration of training.

**Maximum funds: services provided under housing, childcare or dependent care support will not exceed \$9,000**

**\*\*Transportation:**

**Gas cards, bus passes, cab fare:** may be given to youth to assist in youth being able to participate in youth program activities, training, and employment.

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Board Approved:

- a) Gas cards/ bus passes are to be utilized as a supplement to overall transportation costs, not to totally subsidize transportation costs of a youth. Youth is to understand that this is a supplement to assist with transportation costs.
- b) **Gas cards** are distributed and paid at the current deferral government rate <https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates> . Participant shall receive no more than \$50 in gas cards per day, covering only one full round trip to and from training or placement. Participant will not receive gas cards for days not in programs or training. **Training provider signed attendance sheets are required as supporting documentation.** If a provider cannot sign the attendance sheets, participant must return gas receipt after using the gas card. **No** additional cards will be issued if the participant does not return signed attendance sheet or receipt (which will include the gas card # on the receipt).
- c) Youth must return gas receipt after using the gas card. **No** additional cards will be issued if the youth does not return the receipt (which will include the gas card # on the receipt).
- d) **Bus Passes** are purchased on a monthly basis, unless the training is for a shorter length of time. Rate of bus pass purchase will vary depending on the travel needs of that youth, to be determined with the Youth Staff.
- e) **Uber/Lyft/Taxi expenses** are approved for instances where bus passes are not sufficient for covering transportation needs. (For example, when someone can take a bus to a class but there are no bus options for the ride home due to location and/or time of day.) Total expense cannot exceed the \$50/day cap.
- f) Youth who become employed may receive gas cards/ bus pass until their first **unsubsidized** paycheck. Employment and pay schedule will be verified with employer.

#### **Other Transportation Supportive Services:**

- a) Supportive services can include driver training course to assist youth in gaining driver's license to enable youth to participate in youth program activities, training, and employment.
- b) For rural areas and other areas where transportation is limited or non-existent, purchase of a new or be used bicycle may be as a means of viable transportation to enable youth to participate in youth program activities, training, and employment. For rural distances, bike purchase to cover a radius of 25 miles is reasonable. Cost of the bicycle can't exceed \$250 and will be purchased by the Youth Program.

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Board Approved:

- c) Other transportation modes or repairs can be funded but requires prior approval by the Workforce Administrator of that youth contract
- All repairs must have an invoice in order to be paid
  - All repairs must be conducted at a state approved repair shop
  - Repairs are only done on vehicles registered to the participating youth. No repairs will be made on family or friend vehicles, even if that vehicle is the youth's mode of transportation.

**Note:** Vehicle repair cap pertains to each training period or training funding request. Therefore, a participant can't repeatedly receive funding assistance for vehicle repair during one training period (unless the total expenses have not yet exceeded \$1,000).

**Note:** Payments will be made directly to authorized service shops. No retroactive payments will be allowed.

**Maximum funds: services provided under transportation support will not exceed \$9,000**

### **Procedure**

The TCWDB shall require all WIOA service providers and grantees receiving funds from a grant or contract administered by TCWDB to comply with this policy and applicable procedures. It is the responsibility of each service provider to become aware of all applicable regulations and to monitor personnel and client activities to ensure compliance. TCWDB shall review grantee compliance with this policy during the annual monitoring process.

Youth Counselors should first contact MOA/MOU (Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding) partners or other community agencies in their area who may offer free services before utilizing WIOA Supportive Services funding, and the attempts made should be documented in OSOS comments. A list of Supportive Services resources can be found online at:

<https://youth.workforcegps.org/resources/2017/01/24/16/00/Supportive-Services-part-one>

<https://youth.workforcegps.org/resources/2018/06/18/15/49/Supportive-Services-part-two>

Youth Counselors may request to increase the maximum amount on an individual basis by sending a written request with explanation to the Youth Program Coordinator. The Coordinator will respond with a decision within 5 business days. Once youth start a paid work experience or obtain unsubsidized employment, the goal would be to assist them with budgeting their income to pay for their own expenses.

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Board Approved:

**Note: This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and is subject to change.**

**\*\* Maximum amount cannot exceed over participants lifetime.**

**At a minimum, service providers shall:**

- 1.) assess the youths' need for supportive services during completion of the ISS
- 2.) document the need for the supportive service and justify issuance of the service in the participant's ISS and in OSOS (including a Comment describing what was provided and why, Achievement Objective and Service)
- 3.) document attempts to obtain the supportive service through other means (i.e. community programs)
- 3.) maintain records of documentation that verify the client received the service through an original signature on a receipt or invoice form
- 4.) update ISS and OSOS as changes occur, including signatures of staff and participant to mark said changes
- 5.) maintain a running tab on youths' supportive service expenditures, not to exceed the \$9,000 cap.